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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUESTING THE FRENCH TO PRESS RUSSIA TO  
SUPPORT SUA AMENDMENTS

REF: SECSTATE 163028

1. (SBU) On September 6, ESTH/NP officer delivered reftel demarche urging France to press for Russian support to amend the UN Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA), to French MFA desk officer for Nuclear Nonproliferation, Sebastian Jaunet. Jaunet promised to circulate the points to the French inter-agency experts involved in SUA negotiations. At Jaunet's request, on October 6, ESTH/NP officer met with him at the MFA for a 'read-out' of the October 5 French demarche to the Russian Embassy in Paris on the SUA topic. Jaunet advised that during the French/Russian meeting the French had sought to send two clear messages to the Russians regarding SUA, namely: that the Russians should join consensus on the SUA amendments and that they should not attempt to reopen negotiations on the text. According to Jaunet, the French explained to the Russians that any attempt to reopen the text might lead to the unraveling of three years of work by experts in preparing the amended text. The French reminded the Russians that the arduous process of formulating the text had been done in close coordination with their government, and, subsequently, the Russians should not be surprised by anything contained in the text.

2. (SBU) Jaunet characterized the Russian response as "noncommittal." The Russians claimed that while Russian legal experts had studied the text closely, the nonproliferation experts in Moscow had not studied it in depth, and no official guidance had been received from the nonproliferation office on the Russian position. The Russians added that they hoped to soon receive guidance, but could not assure the French that there would not be some "difficulties."

(3) (SBU) Jaunet promised to keep ESTH/NP officer apprised of any further response from the Russian Embassy on the matter. ESTH/NP thanked Jaunet for the French government's cooperation on this issue of mutual concern. Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>  
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